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**STATEMENT BY MR. ALEXANDER LUKASHEVICH,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION,  
AT THE 1246th MEETING OF THE OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL**

7 November 2019

**In response to the statements by the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on the Conflict Dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference, and the Head of the High-Level Planning Group**

Mr. Chairperson,

We thank the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, distinguished Ambassadors Igor Popov, Stéphane Visconti and Andrew Schofer, the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, distinguished Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk, and the Head of the High-Level Planning Group, Colonel Vladimir Minarik, for their detailed information on the progress of the negotiating process and their assessment of the current situation in the region.

We highly appreciate the efforts of the Troika of Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group as collective mediators in the elaboration by the parties of a viable solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh problem. The positive work of the mediators goes hand in hand with the continuance of intensive dialogue between the parties concerned with a view to finding common ground in key aspects of the settlement and elaborating confidence-building measures in line with the general aim of preparing the population for peace.

We note with satisfaction the maintenance of relative stability on the line of contact and the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and the small number of violations of the “silence” regime. This is an indication of the parties’ interest in finding a compromise at the negotiating table. We firmly believe that the maintenance and consolidation of the ceasefire regime will contribute to the effectiveness of the mediation mission of the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group.

We look forward to the implementation in practice of the confidence-building measures under discussion between the parties. Reciprocal visits by journalists and a possible exchange of detainees could help significantly to build an atmosphere of trust necessary for progress in the settlement. It is important that the representatives of the parties at all levels refrain from statements and unilateral steps that are obviously hurtful for the negotiation partners. This runs counter to the task of establishing the necessary conditions for progress in the political settlement of the conflict.

We are grateful to Ambassador Kasprzyk and his highly professional team for their important contribution to maintaining stability in the region, encouraging contacts between representatives of the

parties and implementing humanitarian initiatives. Obstacles to the monitoring of the situation on the ground by the Office of the OSCE Personal Representative need to be avoided. It would be useful to return to the practical elaboration of the agreement reached in principle by Armenia and Azerbaijan at the highest level on increasing the opportunities for the OSCE to monitor the situation at the line of contact and on the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

We appreciate the contribution of the High-Level Planning Group to updating the peacekeeping plans in the region within the framework of the mandate approved at the 1994 CSCE Summit in Budapest.

In conclusion, we should like to confirm that the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is among Russia's most important foreign-policy priorities. We intend to continue together and within the framework of the agreed regime with the other member countries of the Troika of Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group to offer the parties all necessary assistance in developing a mutually acceptable basis for a viable compromise.

Thank you for your attention.